

United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management

Determination of NEPA Adequacy DOI-BLM-Y010-2016-0221 DNA

August 2016

Special Recreation Permit for the Commercial River Companies

Location: Colorado River: Loma to Westwater Ranger Station, Westwater Ranger Station to Cisco, Cisco to Castle Creek (Moab Daily), and Dolores River

Applicant/Address:

Ciscto to Castle Creek (Moab Daily) Only:

- AAM's Mild to Wild Rafting Inc. Alex Mickel, 53 Rio Vista Circle Durango, Colorado 81301
- Navtec Expeditions Sportboat. John Williams 321 N Main St. Moab, Utah 84532
- Plateau Restoration, Inc. Michael Smith, PO Box 1363 Moab, Utah 84532
- Wild West Voyages. Kathryn Blitz, 446 S Main Unit A Moab, UT 84532

Dolores River Only:

- Dvorak's Kayak & Rafting Expeditions. Bill Dvorak, 17921 Hwy 285 Nathrop, CO 81236
- Wilderness Aware Inc. Joe Greiner, PO Box 1550 Buena Vista, CO 81211

Westwater Ranger Station to Cisco Only:

- RRA Co. LLC dba Rimrock Adventures. Travis Baier, PO Box 608 Fruita, CO 81521

Westwater Ranger Station to Cisco Only:

- Canyon Country River Adventures, Inc. Brian Merrill, 7258 Racquet Club Dr. Salt Lake City, Utah 84121

Ciscto to Castle Creek and Dolores River

- Deer Hill Inc., dba Deer Hill Expeditions. Jason Kroll, PO Box 180 Mancos, CO 81328
- Red River Adventures. Carl Dec, 2910 McClelland St. Salt Lake City, Utah 84106



Loma to Westwater Ranger Station and Westwater Ranger Station to Cisco:

- R.O.W. dba Holiday River Expeditions. John Wood, 544 E. 3900 S. Salt Lake City, Utah 84107

Westwater Ranger Station to Cisco and Cisco to Castle Creek:

- Colorado River & Trail Expeditions, Inc. David Mackay, 5058 S. Commerce Dr. Salt Lake City, Utah 84107

Cisco to Castle Creek, Loma to Westwater Ranger Station and Westwater Ranger Station to Cisco:

- Myke Hughes, Inc. dba Adrift Adventures. Myke Hughes, 378 N. Main St Moab, Utah 84532
- Sweetwater Ryder LLC dba Anderson Camps, Ltd. D Stuart, 7177 Colorado River Rd Gypsum, CO 81637
- Niskanen & Jones, Inc. dba San Juan. Bob Jones, 452 N. Main Moab, Utah 84532
- Niskanen & Jones, Inc. dba Tag-A-Long. Bob Jones, 452 N Main Moab, UT 84532
- Western River Expeditions, Inc. Brian Merrill, 7258 Racquet Club Dr. SLC, UT 84121
- Westwater River Company dba Holiday River Expeditions. John Wood, 544 E 3900 S Salt Lake City, UT 84107
- Raft Moab, Inc. dba World Wide River Expeditions. Stephen & Nicki Hazlett, 625 Riversands Rd Moab, Utah 84532

Loma to Westwater Ranger Station, Westwater Ranger Station to Cisco, Cisco to Castle Creek, and Dolores River

- Canyon Adventures Inc., dba Canyon Voyages Adventure Co. Denise Oblak, 211 North Main St. Moab, Utah 84532
- Canyonlands Field Institute. Karla VanderZanden, PO Box 68 Moab, Utah 84532
- Holiday River Expeditions. John Wood, 544 E. 3900 S. Salt Lake City, Utah 84017
- Navtec Expeditions Downriver. John Williams, 321 N Main St Moab, Utah 84532
- O.A.R.S. Canyonlands, Inc. George Wendt, PO Box 67 Angels Camp, CA 95222
- Sheri Griffith Expeditions. Jose Tejada, PO Box 1324 Moab, Utah 84532
- Splore. Becky Van Horsen, 774 E 3300 S Ste. 105 Salt Lake City, Utah 84106

Moab Field Office
82 East Dogwood
Moab, Utah 84532
Phone: 435-259-2100
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Worksheet

Determination of NEPA Adequacy

U.S. Department of the Interior
Utah Bureau of Land Management

The signed CONCLUSION at the end of this worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal analysis process and does not constitute an appealable decision; however, it constitutes an administrative record to be provided as evidence in protest, appeals and legal procedures.

OFFICE: Moab Field Office

PROJECT NUMBER: MFO-Y010-16-113R, MFO-Y010-16-114R, MFO-Y010-1-115R, MFO-Y010-16-116R, MFO-Y010-16-117R, MFO-Y010-16-118R, MFO-Y010-16-119R, MFO-Y010-16-137R, MFO-Y010-16-120R, MFO-Y010-16-121R, MFO-Y010-16-122R, MFO-Y010-16-123R, MFO-Y010-16-124R, MFO-Y010-16-125R, MFO-Y010-16-126R, MFO-Y010-16-127R, MFO-Y010-16-128R, MFO-Y010-16-129R, MFO-Y010-16-130R, MFO-Y010-16-131R, MFO-Y010-16-132R, MFO-Y010-16-136R, MFO-Y010-16-133R, MFO-Y010-16-134R, MFO-Y010-16-112R, MFO-Y010-16-135R (see in Applicant section).

PROPOSED ACTION TITLE: Special Recreation Permit for the Colorado River: Loma to Westwater Ranger Station, Westwater Ranger Station to Cisco, Cisco to Castle Creek (Moab Daily), and Dolores River

LOCATION/LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Colorado River: Loma to Westwater Ranger Station, Westwater Ranger Station to Cisco, Cisco to Castle Creek (Moab Daily), and Dolores River

APPLICANT:

- Myke Hughes, Inc. dba Adrift Adventures. Myke Hughes: MFO-Y010-16-113R
- Sweetwater Ryder LLC dba Anderson Camps, Ltd. D Stuart: MFO-Y010-16-114R
- Canyon Country River Adventures, Inc. Brian Merrill: MFO-Y010-16-115R
- Canyon Adventures Inc., dba Canyon Voyages Adventure Co. Denise Oblak: MFO-Y010-16-11R
- Canyonlands Field Institute. Karla VanderZanden: MFO-Y010-16-117R
- Colorado River & Trail Expeditions, Inc. David Mackay: MFO-Y010-16-118R
- Deer Hill Inc., dba Deer Hill Expeditions. Jason Kroll: MFO-Y010-16-119R
- Dvorak's Kayak & Rafting Expeditions, Bill Dvorak: MFO-Y010-16-137R
- Holiday River Expeditions. John Wood: MFO-Y010-16-0120R
- AAM's Mild to Wild Rafting Inc. Alex Mickel: MFO-Y010-16-121R
- Navtec Expeditions Downriver. John Williams: MFO-Y010-16-122R
- Navtec Expeditions Sportboat. John Williams: MFO-Y010-16-123R
- O.A.R.S. Canyonlands, Inc. George Wendt: MFO-Y010-16-124R
- Plateau Restoration, Inc. Michael Smith: MFO-Y010-16-125R

- R.O.W. dba Holiday River Expeditions. John Wood: MFO-Y010-16-126R
- Red River Adventures. Carl Dec: MFO-Y010-16-127R
- RRA Co. LLC dba Rimrock Adventures. Travis Baier: MFO-Y010-16-128R
- Niskanen & Jones, Inc. dba San Juan. Bob Jones: MFO-Y010-16-1029R
- Sheri Griffith Expeditions. Jose Tejada: MFO-Y010-16-130R
- Splore. Becky Van Horsen: MFO-Y010-16-131R
- Niskanen & Jones, Inc. dba Tag-A-Long. Bob Jones: MFO-Y010-16-132R
- Western River Expeditions, Inc. Brian Merrill: MFO-Y010-16-136R
- Westwater River Company dba Holiday River Expeditions. John Wood: MFO-Y010-16-133R
- Wild West Voyages. Kathryn Blitz: MFO-Y010-16-134R
- Wilderness Aware Inc. Joe Greiner: MFO-Y010-16-112R
- Raft Moab, Inc. dba World Wide River Expeditions. Stephen & Nicki Hazlett: MFO-Y010-16-135R

Description of the Proposed Action and Any Applicable Mitigation Measures

Myke Hughes, Myke Hughes, Inc. dba Adrift Adventure; D. Stuart, Sweetwater Ryder LLC dba Anderson Camps; Brian Merrill, Canyon Country River Adventures, Inc.; Denise Oblak, Canyon Adventures Inc. dba Canyon Voyages Adventure Co.; Karla VanderZanden, Canyonlands Field Institute; David Mackay, Colorado River & Trail Expeditions, Inc.; Jason Kroll, Deer Hill Inc., dba Deer Hill Expeditions; Bill Dvorak, Dvorak's Kayak & Rafting Expeditions; John Wood, Holiday River Expeditions; Alex Mickel, AAM's Mild to Wild Rafting Inc.; John Williams, Navtec Expeditions Downriver and Navtec Expeditions Sportboat; George Wendt, O.A.R.S. Canyonlands, Inc.; Michael Smith, Plateau Restoration, Inc.; John Wood, R.O.W. dba Holiday River Expeditions; Carl Dec, Red River Adventures; Travis Baier, RRA Co. LLC dba Rimrock Adventures; Bob Jones, Niskanen & Jones, Inc. dba San Juan; Jose Tejada, Sheri Griffith Expeditions; Becky Van Horsen, Splore; Bob Jones, Niskanen & Jones Inc. dba Tag-A-Long; Brian Merrill, Western River Expeditions, Inc.; John Wood, Westwater River Company dba Holiday River Expeditions; Kathryn Blitz, Wild West Voyages; Joe Greiner, Wilderness Aware Inc.; and Stephen & Nicki Hazlett, Raft Moab, Inc. dba World Wide River Expeditions respectively have requested a Special Recreation Permit (SRP) which would provide a limited time authorization to conduct commercial river tours on the Colorado and/ or Dolores Rivers (see title page for locations for each of the permits).

The Moab Resource Management Plan, signed October 2008 established twenty-two commercial permits for the Cisco to Castle Creek portion of the Colorado River, eighteen commercial permits for the Westwater Ranger Station to Cisco portion of the Colorado River, and fourteen commercial permits for the lower Dolores River.

Each of the applicants has applied for the portion(s) of the rivers for which they are currently permitted.

B. Land Use Plan (LUP) Conformance

LUP Name* Moab Resource Management Plan

Date Approved October, 2008

*List applicable LUPs (for example, resource management plans; activity, project, management or program plans; or applicable amendments thereto).

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUPs because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions:

Page 97 of the Moab RMP reads as follows: "Special Recreation Permits are issued as a discretionary action as a means to: help meet management objectives, provide opportunities for economic activity, facilitate recreational use of public lands, control visitor use, protect recreational and natural resources, and provide for the health and safety of visitors." In addition, on page 98 of the Moab RMP, it states, "All SRPs will contain standard stipulations appropriate for the type of activity and may include stipulations necessary to protect lands or resources, reduce user conflicts, or minimize health and safety concerns....Issue and manage recreation permits for a wide variety of uses to enhance outdoor recreational opportunities, provide opportunities for private enterprise, manage user-group interaction, and limit the impacts to such uses upon natural and cultural resources."

The Moab Resource Management Plan (RMP), Final Environmental Impact Statement, signed October 31, 2008, identified lands with wilderness characteristics. The proposed includes some areas determined to have wilderness characteristics. The proposed activity would not result in any in the impacts or impairment to these lands.

C. Identify the applicable National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents and other related documents that cover the proposed action.

List by name and date all applicable NEPA documents that cover the proposed action.

Moab Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision, Final Environmental Impact Statement (UT060-2007-04), signed October, 2008 as follows:

Two Rivers SRMA - (29,839) a destination SRMA with the objective of continuing to provide distinct, high quality opportunities for recreational boating and camping and to protect the outstanding resource values. Use launch systems and campsite assignments to reduce inter-party contacts.

"Boating Management -- Westwater Canyon: Manage to provide an opportunity for whitewater boating in a primitive and remote setting. Permits required for private and commercial use...For commercial use, establish a maximum trip size of 25 passengers, plus one crew member per passenger carrying raft, plus two additional crew. Establish a commercial daily launch limit of 75 passengers. Permit 18 commercial outfitters." (page 95)

"Boating Management – Cisco Landing to Dewey Bridge: Manage to provide an opportunity for scenic flat water boating or as an extension of Westwater Canyon trips."

Colorado Riverway SRMA (89,936) "Manage the Dewey Bridge to Castle Creek portion of the Colorado River to provide opportunities for high use boating in a scenic setting."

Boating Management – "Dewey to Castle Creek: Manage to provide an opportunity for scenic, mild whitewater boating. No restrictions on amount of private use will be established unless unacceptable resource impacts occur. Permit 22 unallocated commercial permits. No further restrictions on amounts of commercial use will be established." (page 89)

Boating Management- Dolores River from Bridge Canyon to its confluence with the Colorado River: Manage to provide opportunity for scenic whitewater boating trips. Permits required for private and commercial use. Establish maximum group size of 25 (excluding guides on commercial river trips). Do not establish daily launch limits. Permit 14 unallocated commercial outfitters.

D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria

1. Is the new proposed action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? Is the project within the same analysis area, or if the project location is different, are the geographic and resource conditions sufficiently similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?

☒ Yes
☐ No

Documentation of answer and explanation:

Yes; the existing NEPA document addresses the impacts of commercially guided river tours on river segments within the Moab Field Office boundary.

2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the new proposed action (or existing proposed action), given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values?

☒ Yes
☐ No

Documentation of answer and explanation:

Yes; the 2008 Moab Resource Management Plan contains analysis of the proposed action, as well as three other alternatives. The environmental concerns, interests, resource values, and circumstances have not changed to a degree that warrants broader consideration.

3. Is existing analysis adequate in light of any new information or circumstances (such as, rangeland health standards assessment; recent endangered species listings, updated list of BLM sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that new information and new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action?

☒ Yes
☐ No

Documentation of answer and explanation:

Yes; the existing analysis and conclusions are adequate as there has been no new information or circumstances presented. It can be reasonably concluded that all new information and circumstances are insignificant with regard to analysis of the proposed action.

4. Are the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document?

☒ Yes
☐ No

Documentation of answer and explanation:

Yes; the direct, indirect and cumulative impacts are substantially unchanged from those identified in the existing NEPA document. Yes; site-specific impacts analyzed in the existing document are the same as those associated with the current proposed action.

5. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current proposed action?

☒ Yes
☐ No

Yes; there was an extensive amount of public involvement associated with the 2008 Resource Management Plan Environmental Impact Statement, including a 90 day scoping period and a 90 day comment period. Public meetings were held in six different locations throughout Colorado and Utah. The plan received approximately 50,000 public comments, although none specific to the permit system for the river program were received.

Notification for the current proposed action (renewal of the river permits) was posted on ePlanning on July 25, 2016. A wilderness determination is included in the current document. This level of involvement and notification is adequate for the current proposed action.

E. Persons/Agencies/BLM Staff Consulted:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Resource Represented</u>
Ann Marie Aubry	Hydrologist	Air quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions
David Pals	Geologist	Water Resources, Floodplains, Wastes (hazardous or solid). Geology/ Mineral Resources/ Energy Production
Kim Allison	Rangeland Management Specialist	Soils, Wetlands/ Riparian zones

Katie Stevens	Recreation Planner	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern; Visuals, Wild & Scenic Rivers, Recreation
Bill Stevens	Recreation Planner	BLM Natural Areas, Socio-Economics, Wilderness/ WSA, Lands with Wilderness Characteristics, Environmental Justice
Jared Lundell	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources; Native American Religious Concerns
Jordan Davis	Rangeland Management Specialist	Woodlands, Forestry
Pam Riddle	Wildlife Biologist	Threatened, Endangered, Sensitive or Candidate Animal Species, Migratory Birds, Sensitive Species, Fish and Wildlife
Josh Relph	Fuels Specialist	Fuels/ Fire Management
Dave Williams	Rangeland Management Specialist	Livestock Grazing, RHS, Vegetation, Invasive Species, Threatened, Endangered, or Candidate Plant Species, USFWS
Jan Denney	Realty Specialist	Lands/ Access
ReBecca Hunt-Foster	Paleontologist	Paleontology

CONCLUSION

Plan Conformance:

- ☒ This proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan.
- ☐ This proposal does not conform to the applicable land use plan

Determination of NEPA Adequacy

- ☒ Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitutes BLM's compliance with the requirements of the NEPA.
- ☐ The existing NEPA documentation does not fully cover the proposed action. Additional NEPA documentation is needed if the project is to be further considered.

Megumi
Signature of Project Lead

8.11.16
Date

Kathleen C Stevens
Signature of NEPA Coordinator

8/11/16
Date

Jennifer Jones
Signature of the Responsible Official

8/11/16
Date

Note: The signed Conclusion on this Worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision. However, the lease, permit, or other authorization based on this DNA is subject to protest or appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 and the program-specific regulations.

ATTACHMENTS: ID Team checklist
WSA Determination

INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM CHECKLIST

Project Title: Special Recreation Permit Renewals for Moab Field Office Permitted River Outfitters

NEPA Log Number: DOI-BLM-UT-Y010-2016-0221 DNA

Project Leader: Katie Stevens

DETERMINATION OF STAFF: (Choose one of the following abbreviated options for the left column)

NP = not present in the area impacted by the proposed or alternative actions















NI = present, but not affected to a degree that detailed analysis is required

PI = present with potential for relevant impact that need to be analyzed in detail in the EA



NC = (DNAs only) actions and impacts not changed from those disclosed in the existing NEPA documents cited in Section D of the DNA form. The Rationale column may include NI and NP discussions.

The following elements are not present in the Moab Field Office and have been removed from the checklist:
Farmlands (Prime or Unique), Wild Horses and Burros.

Determination	Resource	Rationale for Determination*	Signature	Date
RESOURCES AND ISSUES CONSIDERED (INCLUDES SUPPLEMENTAL AUTHORITIES APPENDIX 1 H-1790-1)				
NC	Air Quality Greenhouse Gas Emissions		Ann Marie Aubry <i>AM</i>	7-28-16
NC	Floodplains		David Pals <i>DP</i>	7/27/16
NC	Soils	<i>g/m</i>	Kim Allison/D- Williams/D. Jordan	7/27/16
NC	Water Resources/Quality (drinking/surface/ground)		David Pals <i>DP</i>	7/27/16
NC	Wetlands/Riparian Zones		Kim Allison <i>g/m</i>	7/27/16
NC	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern		Katie Stevens <i>KS</i>	7/27/16
NC	Recreation		Katie Stevens <i>KS</i>	7/27/16
NC	Wild and Scenic Rivers		Katie Stevens <i>KS</i>	7/27/16
NC	Visual Resources		Katie Stevens <i>KS</i>	7/27/16
NC	(BLM Natural Areas		Bill Stevens <i>BS</i>	6-27-16
NC	Socio-Economics		Bill Stevens <i>BS</i>	6-27-16
NC	Wilderness/WSA		Bill Stevens <i>BS</i>	6-27-16
NC	Lands with Wilderness Characteristics		Bill Stevens <i>BS</i>	6-27-16
NC	Cultural Resources		Jared Lundell <i>JL</i>	8-4-16
NC	Native American Religious Concerns		Jared Lundell <i>JL</i>	8-4-16
NC	Environmental Justice		Bill Stevens <i>BS</i>	6-27-16
NC	Wastes (hazardous or solid)		David Pals <i>DP</i>	7/27/16

Determination	Resource	Rationale for Determination*	Signature	Date
NC	Threatened, Endangered or Candidate Animal Species		Pam Riddle 	7/27/16
NC	Migratory Birds		Pam Riddle 	7/27/16
NC	Utah BLM Sensitive Species		Pam Riddle 	7/27/16
NC	Fish and Wildlife Excluding USFW Designated Species		Pam Riddle 	7/27/16
NC	Invasive Species/Noxious Weeds		Dave Williams 	7/29/16
NC	Threatened, Endangered or Candidate Plant Species		Dave Williams 	7/29/16
NC	Livestock Grazing		Dave Williams/ Jordan Davis/ Kim Allison	7/27/16
NC	Rangeland Health Standards		Dave Williams/ Jordan Davis/ Kim Allison	7/27/16
NC	Vegetation Excluding USFW Designated Species		Dave Williams/ Jordan Davis/ Kim Allison	7/27/16
NC	Woodland / Forestry		 Jordan Davis	8/3/16
NC	Fuels/Fire Management		 Josh Relph	8/3/16
NC	Geology / Mineral Resources/Energy Production		David Pals 	7/27/16
NC	Lands/Access		Jan Denney 	7.27.16
NC	Paleontology		Rebecca Hunt-Foster 	8/1/16

FINAL REVIEW:

Reviewer Title	Signature	Date	Comments
Environmental Coordinator	Katie Stevens 	8/3/16	
Authorized Officer	J.L. Jones 	8/11/16	

**WILDERNESS INTERIM MANAGEMENT
IMPAIRMENT/NON-IMPAIRMENT EVALUATION FORM**

With the passing of the deadline for completion of reclamation activities in September of 1990, only temporary, non-surface-disturbing actions that require no reclamation; grandfathered uses, and actions involving the exercise of valid existing rights can be approved within WSA's. The reference document for evaluators and managers is Manual 6330, Management of Wilderness Study Areas (July, 2012).

DESCRIPTION OF ACTION

Name of action: DOI-BLM-UT-Y010-060-2016-0221 DNA

Proposed Action: X **Alternative Action:** _____ (check one)

Proposed by: Commercial River Permittees (see attached list)

Description of action: Twenty-eight existing river outfitters have requested authorization through renewed Special Recreation Permits (SRPs) to conduct commercial river tours on segments of the Colorado and Dolores rivers administered by the Moab Field Office. The outfitters' current SRPs expire on December 31, 2016. There would be no changes to the outfitters' plan of operation from what has been authorized in the past. Commercial River Stipulations would accompany each renewed SRP. These SRPs would be issued for a period of up to ten years, in accordance with current BLM SRP policy.

Eighteen of these outfitters would receive renewed authorization to conduct river tours (both day and overnight) in Westwater Canyon WSA. Westwater Canyon is an allocated river segment; allocation levels (e.g., number of user days allowed during the allocation season, May through September of each year) would remain unchanged from previous years. Camping occurs in designated sites assigned by BLM personnel. Hiking within the WSA is often associated with overnight river tours; the most popular hiking location is the Little Dolores waterfall, accessed by the Little Hole, Upper Little Dolores, and Lower Little Dolores campsites. A total of 7,250 user days are allocated for the commercial sector between May and September of each year. A maximum of 75 commercial passengers and four launches are allowed to launch for travel through the WSA each day. Use outside of the allocation season is authorized; however, commercial use during this period is relatively limited.

The only portions of the permit to be analyzed in this document are those segments which lie within the Westwater Canyon Wilderness Study Area (WSA).

Locations: Colorado River and environs within boundaries of Westwater Canyon WSA.

What BLM WSAs are included in the area where the action is to take place?

Westwater Canyon

VALID RIGHTS OR GRANDFATHERED USES (if any)

Is lease, mining claim, or grandfathered use pre-FLPMA? _____ Yes X No

If yes, give name or number of lease(s), mining claim(s) or grandfathered use and describe use or right asserted:

Has a valid existing right been established? _____ Yes X _____ No

EVALUATION OF POTENTIAL FOR IMPAIRMENT OF WILDERNESS VALUES

Is the action temporary and non-surface disturbing? X Yes _____ No

If yes, describe why action would be temporary and non-surface disturbing and identify the planned period of use:

Activity would consist of one or two one-day guided whitewater boating tours. Commercial activities are permitted uses in wilderness, including WSA's. Whitewater boating has been a long-established grandfathered activity within Westwater Canyon. Although use is permitted year-round, most commercial use occurs in the summer months. The Wilderness Act states: "*Commercial activities may be performed within the wilderness areas designated by this Act to the extent necessary for activities which are proper for realizing the recreational or other wilderness purposes of the areas.*" The BLM's Manual 6330 states that most recreational activities are allowed within WSA's. The document goes on to state: "*Boating may be allowed with or without motors as long as supporting facilities and activities within the WSA satisfy the non-impairment criteria*". The proposed action does not increase permitted use beyond which was present at the time of the establishment of the WSA. As will be detailed below, the level of use present at that time did not detract from wilderness character.

Failure to adhere to the permit's stipulations could result in non-renewal by the BLM's Administrative Officer.

When the use, activity, or facility is terminated, would the area's wilderness values be degraded so far as to significantly constrain the Congress's prerogative regarding the area's suitability for preservation as wilderness?

Naturalness: Effects to the natural environment would center on designated camping areas and natural travel routes up side canyons within Westwater Canyon itself. Impacts could involve soils and vegetation. The campsites and the more widely-used side canyon trails have been popular since before creation of the WSA. No camping is allowed outside the designated campsites. All groups must use fire rings, and carry out all solid human waste and trash.

Naturalness as an ingredient in wilderness is defined as lacking evidence of man's impacts on a relatively permanent basis. None of the potential effects described above would affect significantly this aspect of naturalness essential to wilderness character. There would be no permanent structures or other improvements allowed under these permits.

Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude: This activity would not decrease opportunities for solitude relative to their current status, since there would be no increase in use during the allocated season, when virtually all commercial use occurs. The 1991 Utah Statewide Wilderness Study Report specifically addressed the impact of whitewater boating in Westwater Canyon. The report states: "*Closely-spaced parties, boating or camping on the Colorado River, tend to be aware of each other, but the winding nature of Westwater Canyon and the rapids tend to reduce contacts while floating the river...The heavy recreation use in Westwater Canyon during the river-running season detracts from the feeling of seclusion. Campsites are assigned. Near maximum allowed use occurs throughout the summer season. Crowding increases at times of high water, when some of the available campsites are flooded. The Little Dolores, Star, and Marble side canyons provide limited dispersion opportunities to alleviate crowding along the river corridor*" (pp.947-948). Despite this, the report did find that this part of the WSA met the criterion for outstanding opportunities for solitude. The proposed action does not

increase the permitted use above the levels occurring at the time at which the original report formed this conclusion.

Outstanding Opportunities for Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: There is no reason to believe that the proposed action will reduce these opportunities. The aforementioned 1991 report states: "*Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are outstanding within parts of the WSA, primarily because of the whitewater river running potential and related camping and hiking activities*" (p. 948). The proposed action does not increase the permitted use above the levels occurring at the time at which the original report formed this conclusion.

Optional Supplemental values: No perceived negative impacts. The original inventory identified scenery, cultural and historical sites, and wildlife as special features. The original report does not associate the activities which would occur under the proposed action with any detriment to these special values. The proposed action does not increase the permitted use above the levels occurring at the time at which the original report formed this conclusion.

Considered cumulatively with past actions, would authorization of the action impair the area's wilderness values? Yes X No

Rationale: Commercial activities are permitted not only in WSA's, but in officially-designated wilderness.

RESULTS OF EVALUATION

Non-impairment Standard

The only actions permissible in study areas are temporary uses that do not create surface disturbance, require no reclamation, and do not involve permanent placement of structures. Such temporary or no-trace activities may continue until Congress acts, so long as they can be terminated easily and immediately.

The only exceptions to the non-impairment standard are:

- 1) emergencies such as suppression activities associated with wildfire or search and rescue operations,
- 2) reclamation activities designed to minimize impacts to wilderness values created by IMP violations and emergencies;
- 3) uses and facilities which are considered grandfathered or valid existing rights as defined in Manual 6330,
- 4) uses and facilities that clearly protect or enhance the land's wilderness values or that are the minimum necessary for public health and safety in the use and enjoyment of the wilderness values, and
- 5) reclamation of pre-FLPMA impacts.

MAJOR CONCLUSION OF NON-IMPAIRMENT EVALUATION

Action clearly fails to meet the non-impairment standard or any exceptions, e.g. VER, and should not be allowed: Yes X No

Action appears to meet the non-impairment standard: X Yes No

Action may be allowable, pre-FLPMA grandfathered use: Yes No X N/A

Action may be allowable, pre-FLPMA VER:

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

OTHER CONCLUSIONS

Restrictions proposed may unreasonably interfere with pre-FLPMA rights or grandfathered uses:

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

Reasonable measures to protect wilderness values and to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of the lands are incorporated:

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

Environmental Assessment required:

☒ Yes ☐ No

Plan of Operations Required:

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

Discovery verification procedures recommended:

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

Consider initiating reclamation through EA:

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

RELATED ACTIONS

Proposed action posted on E-Planning website:

☒ Yes ☐ No

Media notification appropriate: (optional)

☐ Yes ☒ No

Federal Register Notice appropriate: (optional)

☐ Yes ☒ No

Information copy of case file sent to USO-933:

☐ Yes ☒ No

Evaluation prepared by:

William P. Stevens
Name(s)

August 3, 2016
Date

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
AND
DECISION RECORD**

**Special Recreation Permit for the
Commercial River Companies**

DOI-BLM-UT-Y010-2016- 0221 DNA

FONSI: Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the present document, I have determined that the action will not have a significant effect on the human environment and an environmental impact statement is therefore not required.

DECISION: It is my decision to issue commercial river permits to:

Ciscto to Castle Creek (Moab Daily) Only:

- AAM's Mild to Wild Rafting Inc. Alex Mickel, 53 Rio Vista Circle Durango, Colorado 81301
- Navtec Expeditions Sportboat. John Williams 321 N Main St. Moab, Utah 84532
- Plateau Restoration, Inc. Michael Smith, PO Box 1363 Moab, Utah 84532
- Wild West Voyages. Kathryn Blitz, 446 S Main Unit A Moab, UT 84532

Dolores River Only:

- Dvorak's Kayak & Rafting Expeditions. Bill Dvorak, 17921 Hwy 285 Nathrop, CO 81236
- Wilderness Aware Inc. Joe Greiner, PO Box 1550 Buena Vista, CO 81211

Westwater Ranger Station to Cisco Only:

- RRA Co. LLC dba Rimrock Adventures. Travis Baier, PO Box 608 Fruita, CO 81521

Westwater Ranger Station to Cisco Only:

- Canyon Country River Adventures, Inc. Brian Merrill, 7258 Racquet Club Dr. Salt Lake City, Utah 84121

Cisco to Castle Creek and Dolores River

- Deer Hill Inc., dba Deer Hill Expeditions. Jason Kroll, PO Box 180 Mancos, CO 81328
- Red River Adventures. Carl Dec, 2910 McClelland St. Salt Lake City, Utah 84106

Loma to Westwater Ranger Station and Westwater Ranger Station to Cisco:

- R.O.W. dba Holiday River Expeditions. John Wood, 544 E. 3900 S. Salt Lake City, Utah 84107

Westwater Ranger Station to Cisco and Cisco to Castle Creek:

- Colorado River & Trail Expeditions, Inc. David Mackay, 5058 S. Commerce Dr. Salt Lake City, Utah 84107

Cisco to Castle Creek, Loma to Westwater Ranger Station and Westwater Ranger Station to Cisco:

- Myke Hughes, Inc. dba Adrift Adventures. Myke Hughes, 378 N. Main St Moab, Utah 84532

- Sweetwater Ryder LLC dba Anderson Camps, Ltd. D Stuart, 7177 Colorado River Rd Gypsum, CO 81637
- Niskanen & Jones, Inc. dba San Juan. Bob Jones, 452 N. Main Moab, Utah 84532
- Niskanen & Jones, Inc. dba Tag-A-Long. Bob Jones, 452 N Main Moab, UT 84532
- Western River Expeditions, Inc. Brian Merrill, 7258 Racquet Club Dr. SLC, UT 84121
- Westwater River Company dba Holiday River Expeditions. John Wood, 544 E 3900 S Salt Lake City, UT 84107
- Raft Moab, Inc. dba World Wide River Expeditions. Stephen & Nicki Hazlett, 625 Riversands Rd Moab, Utah 84532

Loma to Westwater Ranger Station, Westwater Ranger Station to Cisco, Cisco to Castle Creek, and Dolores River


- Canyon Adventures Inc., dba Canyon Voyages Adventure Co. Denise Oblak, 211 North Main St. Moab, Utah 84532
- Canyonlands Field Institute. Karla VanderZanden, PO Box 68 Moab, Utah 84532
- Holiday River Expeditions. John Wood, 544 E. 3900 S. Salt Lake City, Utah 84017
- Navtec Expeditions Downriver. John Williams, 321 N Main St Moab, Utah 84532
- O.A.R.S. Canyonlands, Inc. George Wendt, PO Box 67 Angels Camp, CA 95222
- Sheri Griffith Expeditions. Jose Tejada, PO Box 1324 Moab, Utah 84532
- Splore. Becky Van Hosen, 774 E 3300 S Ste. 105 Salt Lake City, Utah 84106
- AAM's Mild to Wild Rafting Inc. Alex Mickel: MFO-Y010-16-121R

This decision is contingent upon meeting all stipulations and monitoring requirements attached.

RATIONALE: The decision to authorize these commercial Special Recreation Permits for the Colorado and Dolores Rivers has been made with consideration of the potential environmental impacts of the proposed action. The action is in conformance with the Moab Resource Management Plan, which allows for recreation use permits for a wide variety of uses to enhance outdoor recreational opportunities, provide opportunities for private enterprise, manage user-group interaction, and limit the impacts to such uses upon natural and cultural resources.

APPEALS:

The decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR Part 4. Public notification of this decision will be considered to have occurred on August 12, 2016. Within 30 days of this decision, a notice of appeal must be filed in the office of the Authorized Officer at the Moab Field Office, 82 East Dogwood, Moab, Utah 84532. If a statement of reasons for the appeal is not included with the notice, it must be filed with the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of Hearings and Appeals, U.S. Department of the Interior, 801 North Quincy St., Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22203 within 30 days after the notice of appeal is filed with the Authorized Officer.



 Authorized Officer

8/11/2016

 Date